



BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC PETER JAY SHARP BUILDING 30 LAFAYETTE AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11217—1486

***Bark of Millions, a new rock opera from Taylor Mac, Matt Ray,
and Machine Dazzle makes US Premiere at BAM, Feb 5—10***

Landmark exhibition “LGBTQ Artists Archive Project: Downtown NYC Innovators 2023” to open in the adjacent Rudin Family Gallery on Feb 1

****Press opening, Feb 6 at 7PM****

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

BAM, Onassis USA, and Pomegranate Arts present

Bark of Millions

Lyrics and direction by Taylor Mac

Music and musical direction by Matt Ray

Co-directed by Nigel Smith

Co-directed and choreography by Faye Driscoll

Costume design by Machine Dazzle

Lighting design by John Torres

Sound design by Brendan Aanes

Art Direction by Matthew Buttrey

Props Design by Oscar Escobedo & Zach Blumner

With Ari Folman-Cohen, Bernice “Boom Boom” Brooks, Chris Giarino, Dana Lyn, El Beh, Greg Glassman, Jack Fuller (Vocal Captain), Joel E. Mateo, Jules Skloot, Le Gateau Chocolat, Lisa “Paz” Parrott, Machine Dazzle, Mama Alto, Marika Hughes, Matt Ray, Sean Donovan (Associate Choreographer), Steffanie Christi’an, Stephen Quinn, Taylor Mac, Thornetta Davis, Viva DeConcini, Wes Olivier

Feb 5-10

Critic’s night is Feb 6 at 7PM with no embargo.

For press tickets contact Sarah Garvey at sgarvey@BAM.org.

Harvey Theater at the BAM Strong

651 Fulton St.

Brooklyn, NY

Tickets start at \$35

“A moving, witty, extravagant exercise in pure pleasure and spectacle. Exuberant.”

—*The Guardian*

“This feels like a cross between the best house party you’ve ever been to, a tent revival, a hedonistic nightclub, and a ritualistic gathering: it’s queer church at its ecstatic best.”—*The Queer Review*

January 16, 2024/Brooklyn, NY—A powerhouse collective of international artists ignite an electrifying collision of performance, live music, and drag spectacle in the latest from theater-making renegades Taylor Mac, Matt Ray, and Machine Dazzle. Part rock opera, part reimaged pride parade, *Bark of Millions* features 55 original songs—one to mark each year since the landmark Stonewall Uprising each honoring a queer icon from Claude Cahun to Oscar Wilde—in an exploration of humanity through a queer lens.

Co-directed by Taylor Mac with the award-winning visionaries Niegel Smith and Faye Driscoll (*A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*), and with the extravagance of Machine Dazzle's costume design, this joyous epic is brought to life by an international ensemble of 22 artists.

Bark of Millions is a transformative and joyful experience that is both a celebration of and a gift to the queer canon, expanding the archive for generations to come.

Taylor Mac (co-creator, lyrics, co-director, ensemble) is the first American to receive the International Ibsen Award, is a MacArthur Fellow, a Pulitzer Prize Finalist, a Tony nominee for Best Play, and the recipient of the Kennedy Prize (with Matt Ray), the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a Guggenheim, the Herb Alpert Award, a Drama League Award, the Helen Merrill Playwriting Award, the Booth, two Helpmann Awards, a NY Drama Critics Circle Award, two Obie's, two Bessies, and an Ethyl Eichelberger. An alumnus of New Dramatists, judy is the author of *The Hang* (with composer Matt Ray); *Gary: A Sequel to Titus Andronicus*; *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*; *Prosperous Fools*; *The Fre*; *Hir*; *The Walk Across America for Mother Earth*; *The Lily's Revenge*; *The Young Ladies Of*; *Red Tide Blooming*; *The Be(A)st of Taylor Mac*; and the revues *Comparison is Violence*; *Holiday Sauce*; and *The Last Two People on Earth: An Apocalyptic Vaudeville* (created with Mandy Patinkin and Susan Stroman).

Matt Ray (co-creator, music, music director, keyboards) is an Obie Award-winning theater-maker, composer, pianist, singer, songwriter, arranger, and music director. His arrangements have been called "wizardly" (*Time Out NY*) and "ingenious" (*The New York Times*), and his piano playing referred to as "classic, well-oiled swing" (*The New York Times*) and "to cry for" (*Ebony*). For his work on Taylor Mac's show *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* he and Mac shared the 2017 Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired By American History. He and Mac's jazz-based theater piece *The Hang* opened to rave reviews in January of 2022 and won Ray a 2023 Obie Award for Music Direction and Composition. The show also received four Drama Desk and two Drama League nominations including a Drama Desk nomination for Matt Ray for Best Music. His show *Matt Ray Plays Hoagy Carmichael* featuring Kat Edmonson premiered at Lincoln Center's American Songbook series in 2018. He has performed worldwide, including as a US Department of State Jazz Ambassador.

Beloved downtown bon vivant and all-around creative provocateur **Machine Dazzle** (costume designer, ensemble) has been dazzling stages via costumes, sets, and performance since his arrival in New York in 1994. He designs intricate, unconventional wearable art pieces and bespoke installations. As a stage designer, Dazzle has collaborated with Julie Atlas Muz, Big Art Group, Mx. Justin Vivian Bond, Taylor Mac, Basil Twist, Godfrey Reggio, Jennifer Miller, The Dazzle Dancers, Big Art Group, Mike Albo, Stanley Love, Soomi Kim, Pig Iron Theatre Company, Opera Philadelphia, the Bearded Ladies Cabaret, the Curran Theatre, and

Spiegelworld; and has created bespoke looks for fashion icons including designer Diane von Furstenberg and model Cara Delevingne for the 2019 Metropolitan Museum of Art Gala. Recent collaborations include *Bassline Fabulous* with the Catalyst Quartet (Metropolitan Museum of Art); *Treasure*, a rock-and-roll cabaret of original songs + accompanying fashion show; and the historic premiere of the never-before-seen Rameau comedic opéra-ballet, *Io* (Opera Lafayette). He was a co-recipient the 2017 Bessie Award for Outstanding Visual Design, the winner of a 2017 Henry Hewes Design Award, and a 2022 United States Artists Fellow. Dazzle delivered a TED Talk at TED Vancouver in 2023. He has had solo exhibitions at NYC's Museum of Arts and Design ("Queer Maximalism x Machine Dazzle") and Toronto's Harbourfront Centre ("Machine Dazzle: Art And Intention").

"LGBTQ Artists Archive Project: Downtown NYC Innovators 2023"

Feb 5–June 30

Rudin Family Gallery

651 Fulton Street

Brooklyn, NY

Free

This exhibition honors the work of pioneering LGBTQ downtown NYC artists that flourished and had an indelible impact on New York City's culture over the past 35+ years. Artists including **Five Lesbian Brothers, Ain Gordon, Ishmael Houston Jones, John Kelly, Richard Move, Lola Pashalinski**, and **Carmelita Tropicana** will be a part of this comprehensive look at of a generation that blossomed during a period that could be regarded as the last gasp of physical bohemia—a rich and highly influential era—which later coincided with the AIDS pandemic, depleting their ranks and diminishing their collective voices.

"The LGBTQ Artists Archive Project" is a response to the challenges of preservation that have plagued these avant-garde artists, many having their art, archives and material thrown away after they've died – their stories, work, and legacies forgotten. The caretaking of individual artists' legacies is often left to prohibitive costs and/or ill-equipped friends and family members with devastating results, erasing their contributions leaving a selective history. This exhibition will celebrate and acknowledge the LGBTQ artists over the last 50 years who have faced enormous obstacles and have made extraordinary aesthetic contributions that created, in part, today's evolving performing arts landscape.

For press information, contact Sarah Garvey at sgarvey@BAM.org or 718.724.8025.

Credits

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

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Commissioned by Pomegranate Arts and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music)

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